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Australians worried about online privacy but slow to act

An in-depth study by Roy Morgan into Australian attitudes towards privacy in the online world has revealed huge concerns exist around how Australians' personal data is used online.

Around 90% of Australians say it is unacceptable (either somewhat or very unacceptable) for companies to collect personal financial data (15% somewhat & 77% very unacceptable), to scrape the contents of messages or emails (20% somewhat & 69% very unacceptable), or to collect health and medical data (15% somewhat & 74% very unacceptable) for the purpose of tailoring ads and offers to consumers. Under 5% deem these practices acceptable (either very or somewhat acceptable).

However, despite these concerns only around 15% of Australians claim to 'always' or 'often' read terms and conditions when signing up for online services and a majority of over 54% rarely or never read them.

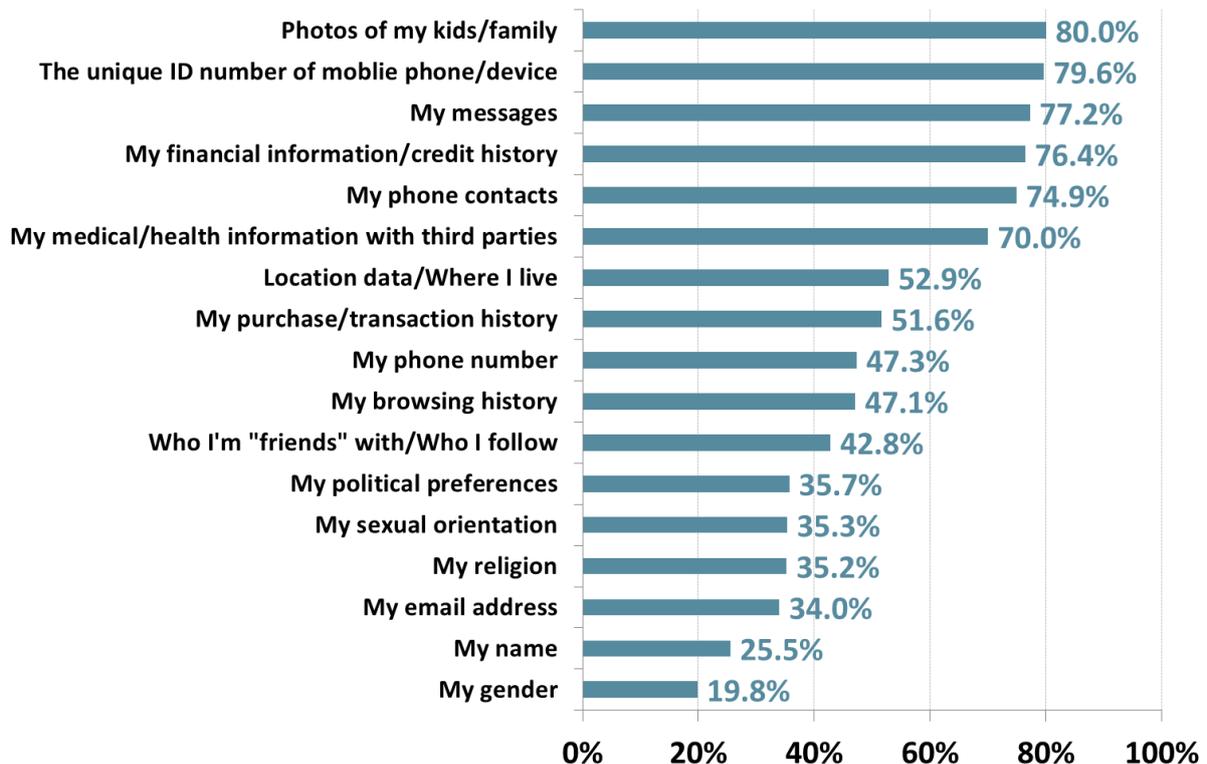
Asked for their views about organisations sharing different types of data and information with third parties 80% of Australians agree they would never want 'Photos of my kids/family' shared with third parties – higher than any other type of data or information.

At least 70% of Australians agreed they would never want the following types of data shared with third parties: 'The unique ID number of mobile phone/device', 'My messages', 'My financial information/credit history', 'My phone contacts' and 'My medical/health information with third parties'.

Australians are far more relaxed about organisations sharing data related to their gender or name with third parties and only around a quarter of Australians say they would 'never want this data shared'.

Question: "How comfortable or uncomfortable would you be with an organisation sharing the following types of data about you with third parties? Very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, somewhat uncomfortable, very uncomfortable, I would never want this shared."

% of Australians who agree 'I would never want this (data) shared'



Source: Roy Morgan privacy survey in June 2018 with 967 Australians aged 14+.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan, says the almost unanimous agreement amongst Australians that it is unacceptable for companies to collect certain types of data on consumers for the purpose of tailoring ads and offers should be a huge concern for social media companies:

"In an age in which the trust of businesses is the key metric the poor ratings for social media companies revealed in Roy Morgan's recent survey of trust amongst media companies – [47% of Australians distrust social media companies](#) compared to only 4% that distrust magazines for example – are a huge concern for the likes of Facebook, Google, Amazon, Apple, Twitter and others.

"Roy Morgan's trust survey identified that one of the leading drivers of the distrust in social media companies is the perception that 'personal information is stolen and distributed' by these companies to their profit and the potential detriment of consumers.

"The results of this in-depth study into privacy concerns shows that huge majorities of Australians would never want photos of their kids/family, private messages, financial information/credit history, phone contacts, medical/health information or the unique ID number of their mobile phone shared with third parties.

"Even larger majorities of Australians approaching 90% say it is at least somewhat unacceptable for these types of data to be used for the purpose of tailoring ads and offers to consumers. This is a core facet of the business model of many social media companies that boast about their ability to target ads to consumers based upon the huge amounts of data they collect on consumers.

"Clearly there is a significant 'disconnect' here between the rights of consumers to expect a certain degree of privacy with regards to their personal information and the business models of social media companies that rely on stockpiling data on consumers to sell advertising.

"Roy Morgan's extensive research into the privacy concerns of Australians and the drivers of trust and distrust that shape perceptions of companies across all industries – including media, retail, banking, health care and others – are a vital resource for businesses seeking to effectively navigate the fast evolving landscape.

"If you would like to know more about how Roy Morgan's data can help your business avoid the pitfalls and traps that will risk reputational damage and potentially cost your business money in a digital age marked by perceptions of trust and distrust around data don't hesitate to contact Roy Morgan."

Roy Morgan interviewed a representative sample of 967 Australians drawn from Roy Morgan's Single Source panel of over 600,000 Australians to conduct this research into Australian concerns about privacy in conjunction with Crikey for their investigative series named 'Prying Eyes'.

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For more information on the results of the survey and a report providing a detailed view of the findings from this study into privacy in the digital world please view the Privacy Report here:

<http://www.roymorganonlinestore.com/Browse/Australia/Economic,-Political-and-Social/Privacy/Privacy-Report.aspx>

The study of 967 respondents looked at how often people read and accepted the Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions when engaging online with websites and apps for social networks such as Facebook, Google, Apple, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat as well as online shopping sites, financial sites, medical and health services sites, online news and newspaper sites and Government sites.

The report looks in depth at how people protect their data and information and their attitudes to companies and governments using their information and sharing with third parties.

Detailed analysis by age, gender and geographic region are included in this report.

Related research findings

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target.

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 75 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
1,000	±3.0	±2.7	±1.9	±1.3
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2